

TRIPLE NEGATIVE BREAST CANCER IN AFRICAN AMERICAN WOMEN

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Studies comparing African American and Caucasian women show that African American women are three times more likely to contract triple negative breast cancer. Triple negative breast cancer cells lack estrogen receptors (ER), progesterone receptors (PR) and HER2 receptors, which are all hormones that fuel tumor growth. In triple negative breast cancer, the lack of receptors implies that hormone treatments that are typically used to treat breast cancer will not work. African American women are also more likely to die from contracting breast cancer than any other group. Many researchers have said that possible reasons for the high mortality rate in African American women can include: diet, lifestyle and genetic predisposition. This research project will explore the genetic predispositions underlying African American women's higher rates of more virulent forms of develop breast cancer.

I hypothesize that African American women are more likely to develop triple negative breast cancer due to a genetic mutation. This research will also address the genetic and biological reasons why African American women are more susceptible to TNEG cancer cells. Beginning data collection methods for this research will include a literature review and interviews with professionals in the field of oncology. Later investigative methods will include genealogy tests of African American women with breast cancer and performing biopsies to find similarities within the cancer cells.